

# SANITARY REFORM.





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*One of the things that Henry George's Supporters want.*

THE platform of the convention that nominated Mr. George for Mayor demands, Sec. iii and iv: "That the laws for the safety and sanitary inspection of buildings should be enforced;" and it declares "the crowding of so many of our people into narrow tenements at enormous rents while half the area of the city is yet unbuilt upon, to be a scandalous evil.

Mr. George, in his letter accepting the nomination, says: "With unsurpassed natural advantages—the gateway of a continental commerce—New York is behind in all else that the citizen might justly be proud of. In spite of the immense sums constantly expended, her highways, her docks, her sanitary arrangements, are far inferior to those of first-class European cities; the great mass of her people must live in tenement houses, and human beings are here packed together more closely than anywhere else in the world; and, though the immense values created by the growth of population might, without imposing any burden upon production, be drawn upon to make New York the most beautiful and healthful of cities, she is dependent upon individual benevolence for such institutions as the Astor Library and the Cooper Institute, and private charity must be called upon for "fresh air funds" to somewhat lessen the horrible infant mortality of the tenement districts. Such parks as we have are beyond the reach of the great mass of the population, who, living in contracted rooms, have no other place than the drinking saloon for the gratification of social instincts, while hundreds of thousands of children find their only playground in crowded streets."

This statement is sustained by abundant official evidence.

## *Life and Death in the Tenements.*

SOME 800,000 persons live in New York tenements, and a large portion of these inhabit rooms which are never lighted by the sun in winter, or sleep in bedrooms which are never aired except from the dwelling-room. In 1865 there were 15,309 tenements in New York; to-day they exceed 26,000, including flats and apartment houses, and they continue to multiply. Among



968 houses examined 65 per cent. were found defective, and 47 buildings were so bad as to deserve destruction. One-half of the total deaths occur in tenements, while the percentage of deaths from preventable diseases is from 39 to 77 per cent. This percentage increased from 51.11 in 1870 to 55.50 in 1884. "Preventable" diseases should be PREVENTED.

### *Massacre of the Innocents.*

THE sacrifice of life is greatest among little children. In the Mulberry Street Bend the mortality of children under five is over 65 per cent.

### *A Constant Epidemic.*

IF cholera should kill as many people in a year as are annually destroyed by diphtheria and scarlet fever, both *preventable* diseases, there would be a panic in New York.

If it is true that "as the homes, so are the people," what a wretched lot is ours!

### *Candid Comments on the Above.*

MAYOR GRACE was re-elected to office under implied pledges to reform the tenements—why has he not done it?

The Board of Health has almost unlimited powers, but it is timid and time-serving. It is not a "board" but only a lath.

There are laws on the statute-books sufficient to effect vast improvements, but the Health authorities choose to ignore them because "public sentiment will not sustain their enforcement;" meantime the poor children die like flies. Let the people elect Henry George and THE LAWS WILL BE ENFORCED.

### *A few Point-blank Questions.*

IF the police have repeatedly raided the Mulberry Street dives in the interests of order, why cannot the Health authorities clean them out in the interests of health? There's no question of "public sentiment" there.

If the cheap lodging-houses are crowded beyond their legal limits, and



typhus fever breaks out, who is to blame? The Board of Health, who know the facts and don't stop the over-crowding!

If the Ladies' Health Association of Beekman Hill could successfully attack Kane's manure heap and reform the slaughter-houses, why could not the health officials do the same?

When the Legislature appointed a Tenement House Commission in 1884, why was its report pigeon-holed at Albany, and its recommendations never heard of afterward?

### *What We Want.*

EVERY house in New York should have a dry cellar, plenty of water, safe plumbing, ample light and ventilation. Every tenement should have a janitor. Privies and cesspools must go. Every factory and workshop and school should be made clean and wholesome. The sewers should be renovated and the streets re-paved and kept clean. "Double-deckers" should be remodeled and God's sunlight and air supplied to all. Lastly, free public baths should be established in Winter as well as in Summer.

The Board of Health makes no annual reports; it inspects buildings only when citizens complain. It has added nothing to sanitary knowledge by investigation or research since Prof. Chandler's day; it shirks its work under a specious plea of "want of funds;" it shelves good men and appoints incompetent ones who have "influence;" it is tainted with corruption, and it has become a mere routine-machine, shackled with red-tape. It wants shaking up.

WHY is it that months have elapsed since General Shaler's indictment without any action on the part of Governor Hill, except that the politicians cannot agree upon "a good man" to appoint as their tool in the place?

Would any stranger visiting the metropolis imagine that the interests of the people were ever regarded by our rulers? Miles of dusty streets, gutters reeking with rubbish and lined with ash barrels, not a tree for miles and miles—and these in the sole playground of the poor. Despotie Europe does better than that.

Here is a city of 1,500,000 people, and not a child is permitted to play ball or fly a kite in the streets, nor is there any other playground provided for the children of the poor, excepting Tompkins Square.

Why is it proposed to spend millions for public parks in the new wards, miles away from the crowded tenement districts, and do nothing for the needs of the people there, who most need breathing places?

Fifth Avenue has just been re-paved at great expense; when will Mulberry Street and First Avenue have decent pavement?

Coney Island and Rockaway are being ruined by Barren Island stench, while garbage is dumped from scows to foul our shores and fill up our beautiful harbor. Hunter's Point sludge acid and oil odors make life miserable to East-side residents. Rotten Buddensieck buildings tumble down every few days—but where else are the poor to live?

When spotted fever—that terrible product of “crowd poisoning”—breaks out in a tenement, why is it so hard for physicians to induce the health officials to act in the matter; and when other contagious diseases are reported to them, why do they *send a circular*—often to people who can't read—instead of disinfecting the premises?

Why are our lodging-houses hot-beds of zymotic diseases, which those of London escape even in the midst of epidemics?

## *Remember*

THESE abuses, bad as they are, *can* be remedied. There is machinery enough, there are laws enough, there is money enough to accomplish enormous improvements. All that is wanted is an honest man at the head, to put the whole work in motion. *That man* stands ready to do his utmost. All that remains is for the workingmen of New York to put him where he ought to be. Will you vote for *Henry George* and a clean city? If you don't, then when your wife is taken ill with *diphtheria*, or your child catches *scarlet fever*, or your baby pines away in your arms for lack of pure air or sunlight, or you yourself are stricken down, it will need no one else to ask the solemn question, “Who's to blame?”

## *A Warning.*

NOTHING but the providentially mild summers of the past four years has prevented an epidemic in the slums. Do the business men of New York wish to go through the experience of Montreal with small-pox or cholera?

Workingmen, you are entitled to the “right to LIFE” under the Declaration of Independence. What are higher wages or shorter hours if you have to breathe bad air, drink impure water, and live in “*double-deckers*?” Elect Henry George and you shall have decent homes.



